blasting especially in precision blasting, high altitude, low temperature and under water applications.

Growth Centres in Andhra Pradesh

2910. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the present status of four Growth Centres approved at Hindupur, Khammam, Ongole and Vizianagaram in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) whether aH of them have been developed and become functional;

(c) if not, the details of Growth Centres which have not been developed so far and the reasons therefor; and

(d) by when these Growth Centres will become functional?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (DR. RAMAN SINGH): (a) to (d) Out of the four Growth Centres approved in Andhra Pradesh, two Growth Centres at Hindupur and Ongole have become functional, as allotment of industrial plots has commenced there. Land has been acquired in the Bobbili Growth Centre and development work is in progress. Government of Andhra Pradesh had proposed for shifting the fourth Growth Centre at Vemsoor from Khammam District to Mahboobnagar District in the State. Government of India has approved, in principle, their proposal for change of location and has asked the State Government to submit detailed proposal. The proposal is awaited.

Modernization of intellectual property administration

2911. SHRI RUMANDLA RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether a massive project to modernize intellectual property administration in India involving patents, designs, trademarks and geographical indications is under implementation;

(b) if so, whether there is a need to deliberate on demystifying

intellectual property through public outreach programmes and establishing sustainable institutions and modernizing intellectual property systems using IT;

(c) whether any concrete decision in this regard has been taken; and

(d) if so, to what extent modernization of intellectual property administration has been implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (DR. RAMAN SINGH): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The modernization initiatives are inclusive of components relating to utilization of information technology both for automation of operations and development of awareness and outreach programmes. In this direction, .several awareness programmes have already been organised, a website of the office launched, booklets/ pamphlets on patents, designs and trademarks prepared and released. In order to sustain these initiatives, appropriate budget provisions have also been made.

(d) Modernized Patent Offices at Delhi and Chennai have already been made operational and the work is in progress in Kolkata and Mumbai. A modernised Design Office is expected to be made operational shortly. Strengthening of infrastructure of the Trademarks Registry is also presently under implementation. A fully modernized Geographical Indications Registry has already been set up at Chennai.

Problems faced by Plantation Industry

2912. SHRI ANANTA SETHI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Plantation Industry in the country is facing a serious crisis; and

(b) if so, the details of steps taken to identify their problems and to framework plan to resolve the problem, those led to crisis of one of the biggest providers of employment and a major foreign exchange earner?